

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A communication apparatus capable of a communication with a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, comprising:

5 automatic answering mode setting means for setting an automatic answering mode for automatically answering an incoming call, and recording a message from a communication partner;

communication means capable of a communication
10 with the single partner using the plurality of communication channels; and

control means for controlling to variably change the number of communication channels used for the single partner in accordance with a setup by said automatic
15 answering mode setting means.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

detection means for detecting an incoming call,
and

20 wherein said control means makes the control when said detection means detects the incoming call.

3. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said communication means makes a communication via a digital line.

25 4. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the digital line is an integrated services digital network.

5. A communication apparatus capable of a communication with a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, comprising:

setting means for independently setting up
5 communications with the single partner using the plurality of channels in correspondence with transmission and reception;

communication means capable of a communication with the single partner using the plurality of
10 communication channels; and

control means for controlling to variably change the number of communication channels used for the single partner in accordance with the setups by said setting means.

15 6. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said setting means can set whether or not a communication with the single partner using the plurality of communication channels is granted.

7. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said
20 communication means can communicate with a plurality of communication partners, and

said setting means can set the number of channels used when a communication with another communication partner is to be started while communicating using the
25 communication channels, the number of which is controlled by said control means.

8. The apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said setting means sets whether or not a communication with the other communication partner is granted.

9. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said
5 communication apparatus can connect a plurality of external communication apparatuses, and

said setting means can set up the communications in units of the plurality of external communication apparatuses.

10 10. The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said communication means can communicate using a plurality of communication schemes, and

said setting means can also set up the communications in units of the plurality of
15 communication schemes.

11. A communication apparatus capable of a communication with a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, comprising:

communication means capable of a communication
20 with the single partner using the plurality of communication channels;

detection means for detecting an incoming call from another communication partner and a call origination request to another communication partner
25 while said communication means communicates using the plurality of communication channels; and

...
setting means capable of independently setting the
number of communication channels used in the
communication with the other communication partner in
correspondence with a case wherein said detection means
5 detects the incoming call, and a case wherein said
detection means detects the call origination request.

12. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said
setting means sets whether or not the incoming call is
accepted when said detection means detects the incoming
10 call, and whether or not the call origination request is
accepted when said detection means detects the call
origination request.

13. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said
communication apparatus can connect a plurality of
15 external communication apparatuses, and

said setting means can set up the communications
in units of the plurality of external communication
apparatuses.

14. The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said
20 communication means can communicate using a plurality of
communication schemes, and

said setting means can also set up the
communications in units of the plurality of
communication schemes.

15. A method of controlling a communication apparatus capable of a communication with a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, comprising:

the automatic answering mode setting step of

5 setting an automatic answering mode for automatically answering an incoming call, and recording a message from a communication partner;

the communication step of allowing a communication with the single partner using the plurality of

10 communication channels; and

the control step of controlling to variably change the number of communication channels used for the single partner in accordance with a setup in the automatic answering mode setting step.

15 16. The method according to claim 15, further comprising:

the detection step of detecting an incoming call, and

wherein the control step includes the step of
20 making the control when the incoming call is detected in the detection step.

17. The method according to claim 15, wherein the communication step includes the step of making a communication via a digital line.

25 18. The method according to claim 17, wherein the digital line is an integrated services digital network.

19. A method of controlling a communication apparatus capable of a communication with a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, comprising:

the setting step of independently setting up
5 communications with the single partner using the plurality of channels in correspondence with transmission and reception;

the communication step of allowing a communication with the single partner using the plurality of
10 communication channels; and

the control step of controlling to variably change the number of communication channels used for the single partner in accordance with the setups in the setting step.

15 20. The method according to claim 19, wherein the setting step includes the step of setting whether or not a communication with the single partner using the plurality of communication channels is granted.

20 21. The method according to claim 19, wherein the communication step allows communications with a plurality of communication partners, and

the setting step includes the step of setting the number of channels used when a communication with another communication partner is to be started while
25 communicating using the communication channels, the number of which is controlled in the control step.

22. The method according to claim 21, wherein the setting step includes the step of setting whether or not a communication with the other communication partner is granted.

5 23. The method according to claim 19, wherein said communication apparatus can connect a plurality of external communication apparatuses, and

the setting step includes the step of setting up the communications in units of the plurality of external
10 communication apparatuses.

24. The method according to claim 23, wherein the communication allows communications using a plurality of communication schemes, and

the setting step also includes the step of setting
15 up the communications in units of the plurality of communication schemes.

25. A method of controlling a communication apparatus capable of a communication with a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, comprising:

20 the communication step of allowing a communication with the single partner using the plurality of communication channels;

the detection step of detecting an incoming call from another communication partner and a call
25 origination request to another communication partner while the communication using the plurality of

communication channels is made in the communication step; and

the setting step of allowing to independently set the number of communication channels used in the communication with the other communication partner in correspondence with a case wherein the incoming call is detected in the detection step, and a case wherein the call origination request is detected in the detection step.

26. The method according to claim 25, wherein the setting step includes the step of setting whether or not the incoming call is accepted when the incoming call is detected in the detection step, and whether or not the call origination request is accepted when the call origination request is detected in the detection step.

27. The method according to claim 25, wherein said communication apparatus can connect a plurality of external communication apparatuses, and

the setting step includes the step of setting up the communications in units of the plurality of external communication apparatuses.

28. The method according to claim 27, wherein the communication step allows communications using a plurality of communication schemes, and

the setting step also includes the step of setting up the communications in units of the plurality of communication schemes.

29. A program storage device readable by a machine,
5 tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for controlling a communication apparatus capable of a communication with a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, said method steps comprising:

10 the automatic answering mode setting step of setting an automatic answering mode for automatically answering an incoming call, and recording a message from a communication partner;

the communication step of allowing a communication
15 with the single partner using the plurality of communication channels; and

the control step of controlling to variably change the number of communication channels used for the single partner in accordance with a setup in the automatic
20 answering mode setting step.

30. A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for controlling a communication apparatus capable of a communication with
25 a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, said method steps comprising:

the setting step of independently setting up communications with the single partner using the plurality of channels in correspondence with transmission and reception;

5 the communication step of allowing a communication with the single partner using the plurality of communication channels; and

 the control step of controlling to variably change the number of communication channels used for the single partner in accordance with the setups in the setting
10 step.

31. A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for controlling a
15 communication apparatus capable of a communication with a single partner using a plurality of communication channels, said method steps comprising:

 the communication step of allowing a communication with the single partner using the plurality of
20 communication channels;

 the detection step of detecting an incoming call from another communication partner and a call origination request to another communication partner while the communication using the plurality of
25 communication channels is made in the communication step; and

the setting step of allowing to independently set the number of communication channels used in the communication with the other communication partner in correspondence with a case wherein the incoming call is
5 detected in the detection step, and a case wherein the call origination request is detected in the detection step.